

suggest making any determinations regarding subsequent inspections (for example, subsequent micro defect inspections) based upon the results of the macro defect inspection. Rather, as noted above, any wafer that is to be inspected is macro and micro defect inspected.

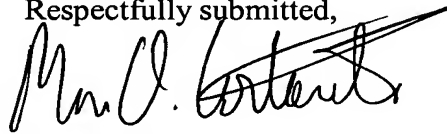
Thus, like the Shiga et al. reference used in the previous Office Action, Sandland et al. does not disclose or suggest the combinations of features recited in the independent claims of this application. With respect to independent claims 1, 8 and 15, Sandland et al. does not disclose or suggest an arrangement in which a second inspection apparatus (claim 1), a second inspection step (claim 8), or an inspection section (claim 15) executes inspection of substrates that do not (or of a substrate that does not) have a defect based on information on the presence/absence of a defect that was determined as a result of a macro inspection. With respect to independent claims 3, 10 and 16, Sandland et al. does not disclose or suggest a second inspection apparatus (claim 3), a second inspection step (claim 10), or an inspection section (claim 16) that executes inspection of substrates that do not (or of a substrate that does not) have a defect distributed in a predetermined portion based on information on the distribution of a defect obtained as a result of a macro inspection of the substrate. With respect to independent claims 5, 12 and 17, Sandland et al. does not disclose or suggest a second inspection apparatus (claim 5), a second inspection step (claim 12), or an inspection section (claim 17) that determines substrate(s) to be inspected from a plurality of substrates based on information on distribution and classification of a defect obtained as a result of a macro inspection of the substrate. Sandland et al. merely automatically performs micro defect inspection after macro defect inspection is performed for every wafer that is inspected.

Accordingly, the independent claims, as well as their dependent claims, are patentable over Sandland et al. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Date: April 12, 2006

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